

Exploring men's perceptions of a community-based men's shed programme in England Get access Arrow
Grant J McGeechan, C Richardson, L Wilson, G O'Neill, D Newbury-Birch

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Abstract

Background

Sheds have been used in Australia for decades as an intervention to try and promote 'health by stealth' among men by providing a social space for those who may be particularly vulnerable to poor mental health. Little is known about the impact of men's sheds in England.

Methods

Members of 19 sheds from one local authority area were invited to participate in focus groups to explore their perceptions of their shed. In total, 32 men participated in five focus groups which were analysed using applied thematic analysis.

Results

While some sheds run activities, the main driving factor of sheds was the social aspect, with many coming along for nothing more than a chat and a cup of tea, allowing men to recapture lost social networks from their working days. However, it was felt that there could be more formal links forged between individual groups, which may result in a better range of activities on offer.

Conclusions

This study indicates that the shed can be an effective way of reducing social isolation in older men. However, further work is needed to understand what impact the shed has on physical and mental well-being.

communities, health promotion, mental health

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